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DON'T GIVE ME THAT! I WAS INTO THEM BEFORE YOU WERE SHAVING. BUT THEY JUST AREN'T THE SAME BAND NOW.
GIRL, WHATTA YOU *TALKIN'* ABOUT?

I SAW THEM LIVE LAST MONTH, AND WITHOUT PAT SMEAR—I DON'T KNOW, THEY JUST DON'T HAVE THAT SPIRIT, Y'KNOW?

ASY
ENING
K RECORDS
JAZZ

SPIRIT!? OH, COME ON!

HE'S JUST A GUITARIST.

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

JOHN ARCUDI
story
GARY FRANK
pencils
CAM SMITH
inks
MARTIN JIMENEZ
colors
WILDSTORM FX
seps
AMIE GRENIER
letters
SCOTT DUNBIER
editor

UH, *EXCUSE* ME? *JUST* A GUITARIST? IS THAT WHAT YOU SAID?

OOPS!

PRINTED IN CANADA

SO THE GUY WHO PLAYS THE *MUSIC*, HE'S NOT IMPORTANT TO A BAND, RIGHT? OR MAYBE YOU THINK GUITARISTS ARE ALL THE *SAME*. ONE'S JUST AS GOOD AS ANOTHER?
WHOA, BOBBY. A JOKE, JUST A JOKE.
EEWW! IS THAT GUY STILL AROUND?
KIM

EH? WHAT'S THE PROB, KIM?
THAT OLD DUDE. HE'S BEEN OUT THERE STARING AT ME EVER SINCE YOU TWO CAME IN.
HE'S CREEPING ME OUT.

NEVER FEAR, HONEY. YOUR KNIGHT IN SHINING FLANNEL IS HERE.
C'MON, BOBBY, LET'S GIVE HIM THE BUM'S RUSH.
RELAX, *SIR* LOIN-OF-BEEF. HE'S NOT HURTING ANYBODY.

YO! PAPPY! PEEP SHOW'S OVER, 'KAY? WHYN'T YOU HEAD DOWN TO THE MISSION, GRAB SOME SOUP OR SOMETHING?
REEEAL SENSITIVE, GRUNGE.

KEEP THEM STANKY HANDS OFFA *ME*, PIGPEN!

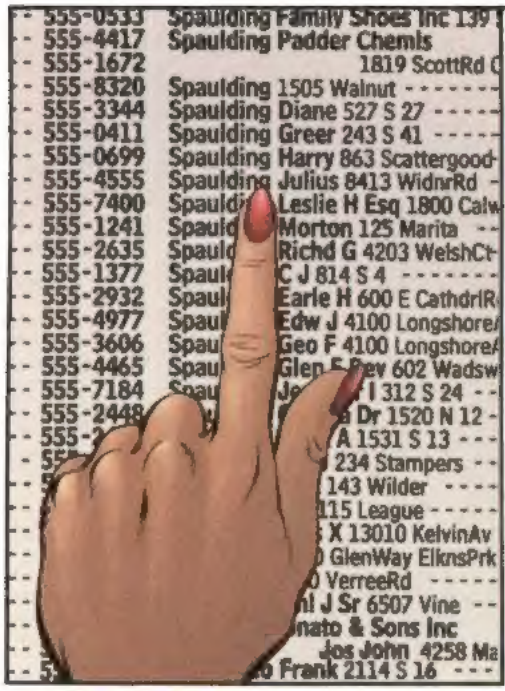
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*, MAN?

ROWF

ROWF ROWF

YOU THINK JUST BECAUSE THIS IS NEW YORK YOU CAN BEAT PEOPLE UP AND GET AWAY WITH IT?
3% OFF
NICE GOING, GRUNGE. NOT ONLY DO YOU DECK SOME HARMLESS OLD BASKET CASE, YOU ATTRACT ATTENTION DOING IT, TOO.
HERE, MISTER. YOU NEED SOME HELP?
MELLOW OUT, LADY. AIN'T NOBODY GETTIN' "BEAT UP" OVER HERE.
GRRRRRRRR

WHAP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ROXY? HAVE YOU SEEN CAITLIN?
NOTHING!!
SLAM!!

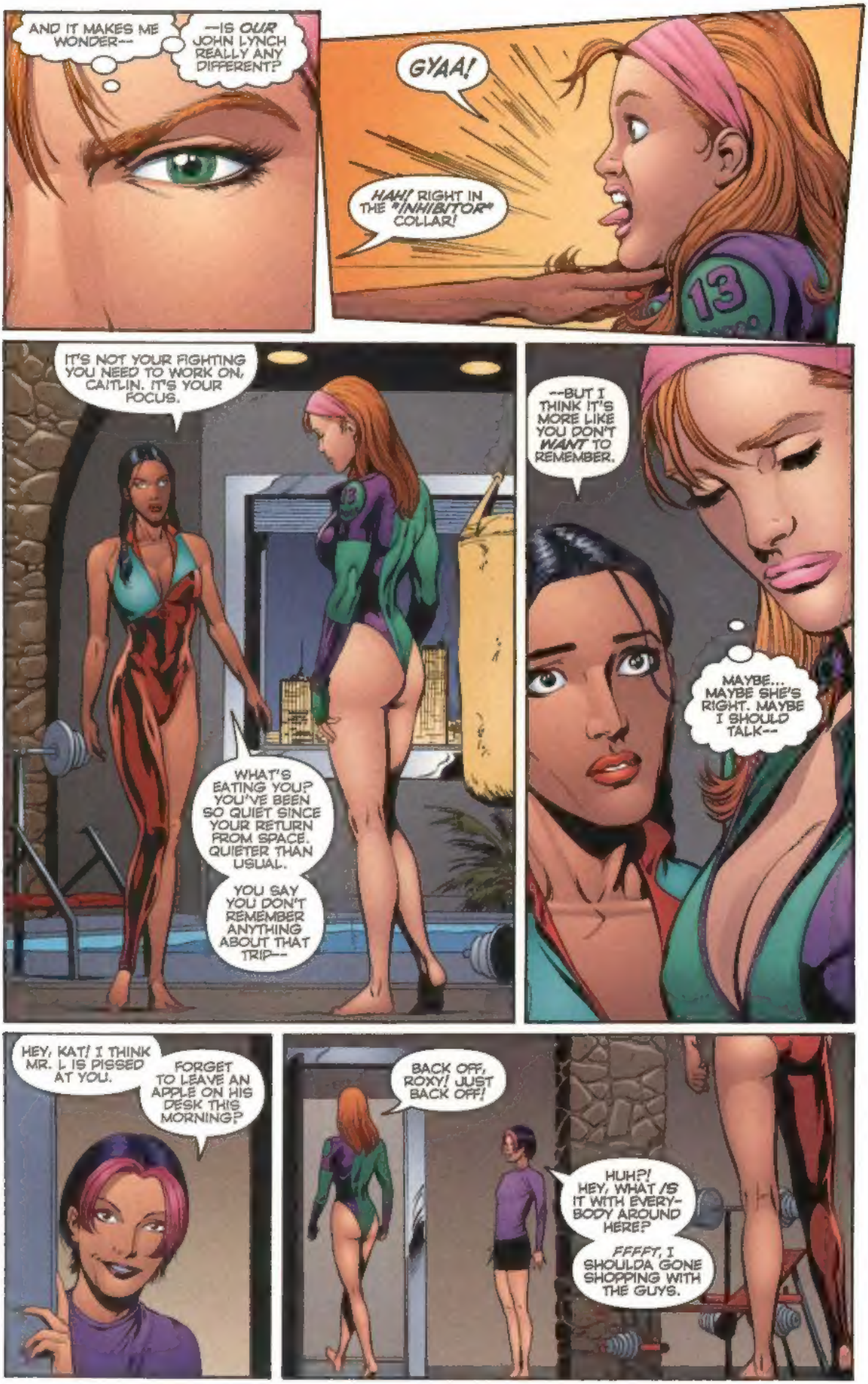
WHAT? ROXY, I ASKED YOU IF YOU'VE SEEN CAITLIN.
OH. WELL, I WAS JUST SPACING, I GUESS. YOU KNOW *ME*. HEH HEH.
UHHH, KAT'S DOWN IN THE GYM WORKING OUT WITH SARAH.

SHE'S BEEN SPENDING A LOT OF TIME DOWN THERE LATELY.
GOOD. FINE.
YOU WANT ME TO GO GET HER?

NO!!!

I...
I JUST WANTED TO KNOW WHERE SHE IS. LET HER FINISH HER WORKOUT.
HMPF! WHAT'S GOT *HIS* BOXERS IN A BUNCH?

SO, CAITLIN, WHY DOES A WOMAN WHO CAN TOSS A CAR OVER A HOUSE WANT TO HONE HER HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT SKILLS?
IT'S TIME I LEARNED HOW TO DEFEND MYSELF WITHOUT MY GEN-FACTOR, THAT'S ALL.
I MEAN, EVERY TIME SOMEBODY WANTS TO TAKE US DOWN, THEY SLAP GEN-INHIBITOR COLLARS ON US, AND WE FOLD.
JUST AS I DID WHEN JOHN LYNCH FROM THE FUTURE PUT A COLLAR ON ME.
BUT IF I HAD BEEN ABLE TO FIGHT BACK, AND STOPPED HIM FROM EXTRACTING A NEURO-SAMPLE FROM ME, WE NEVER COULD'VE RETURNED TO THE PRESENT.
WELL, CAITLIN. ANY TIME YOU'RE READY.
UM, WHAT? OH, RIGHT.
OF COURSE, THAT WASN'T LYNCH'S PLAN A. HE DESTROYED ALL LIFE ON EARTH IN HIS CRUSADE TO DEFEAT THE D'RAHN.
YET, WHEN IT CAME DOWN TO IT, HE SACRIFICED HIMSELF TO MAKE SURE I'D GET BACK TO THE 20TH CENTURY.
SLOPPY, SLOPPY, SLOPPY!
HE TOLD ME TO REMEMBER THE HORRORS I'D SEEN, TO TRY TO CHANGE THE FUTURE--BUT I REMEMBER MORE THAN A RAVAGED WORLD.
I REMEMBER AN OBSESSED, WARPED MAN WHO THOUGHT THAT THE ENDS JUSTIFIED ANY MEANS.


AND IT MAKES ME WONDER--
--IS OUR JOHN LYNCH REALLY ANY DIFFERENT?
GYAA!
HAH! RIGHT IN THE "INHIBITOR" COLLAR!
13
IT'S NOT YOUR FIGHTING YOU NEED TO WORK ON, CAITLIN. IT'S YOUR FOCUS.
WHAT'S EATING YOU? YOU'VE BEEN SO QUIET SINCE YOUR RETURN FROM SPACE. QUIETER THAN USUAL.
YOU SAY YOU DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT THAT TRIP--
--BUT I THINK IT'S MORE LIKE YOU DON'T WANT TO REMEMBER.
MAYBE... MAYBE SHE'S RIGHT. MAYBE I SHOULD TALK--
HEY, KAT! I THINK MR. L IS PISSED AT YOU.
FORGET TO LEAVE AN APPLE ON HIS DESK THIS MORNING?
BACK OFF, ROXY! JUST BACK OFF!
HUH?! HEY, WHAT IS IT WITH EVERY-BODY AROUND HERE?
FFFFT, I SHOULDA GONE SHOPPING WITH THE GUYS.

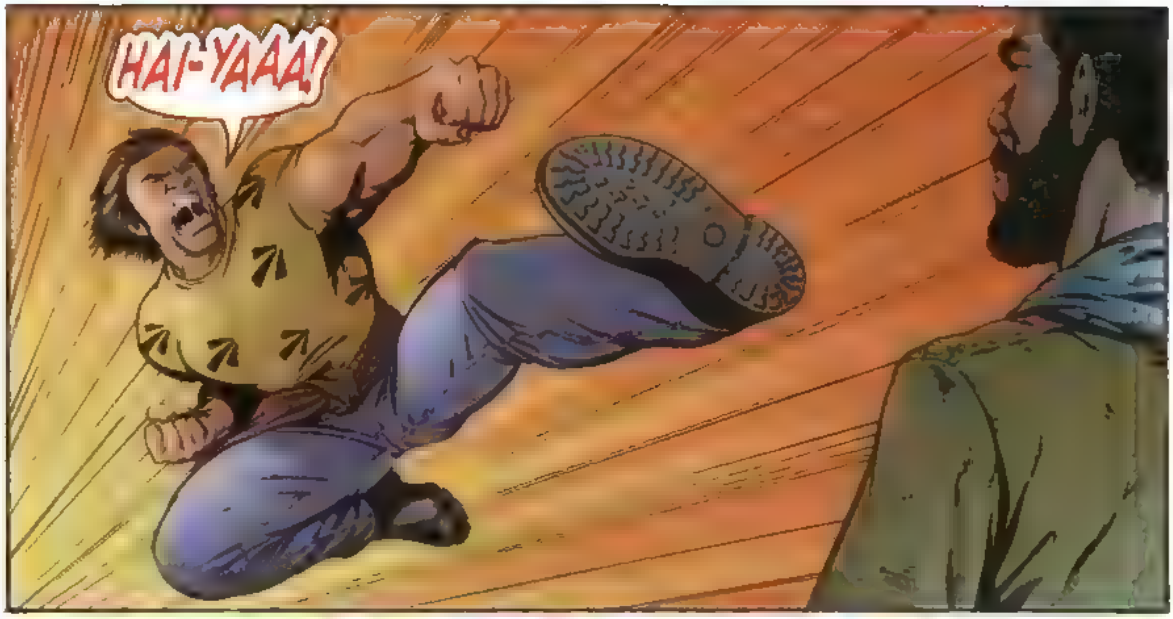
"I BET THEY'RE HAVING FUN."

SOMEBODY CALL THE POLICE!!

BETTER BE CAREFUL, OLD TIMER, OR YOU'RE GONNA PISS ME
OOOFF!
YIP
YIP
YIP

OOCH! SO, HOW 'BOUT A LITTLE HELP WITH THIS "HARMLESS OLD BASKET CASE," BOBBY?
Y'KNOW, IF YOU'RE NOT TOO BUSY!

LOOK, I'M NOT THE ONE WHO STARTED THIS FIGHT!
HEY! I DIDN'T EITHER WELL, NOT ON PURPOSE
ANYWAY, HOW'S I SUPPOSED TO KNOW HE WAS SO TOUGH?
I MEAN, LOOKIT HIM!! HE CAN'T WEIGH 150 POUNDS, AND HE'S CLEANING THE STREET WITH US
LET'S SEE HIM KEEP THAT UP AFTER I ABSORB THIS LAMPPOST AND SHOVE A STEEL FIST INTO HIS FACE
GRUNGE, NO!! REMEMBER WHAT MY DAD SAID
AFTER OUR FIGHT WITH I.O. LAST MONTH, WE HAVE TO LAY LOW USING YOUR POWERS IS TOO HIGH PROFILE
IF ONLY CAITLIN WERE HERE. SHE COULD BEAT THIS GUY WITH HER SUPER-STRENGTH, BUT STILL MAKE IT LOOK NATURAL.
ARE YOU SERIOUS? THE TIGER-STYLE MASTER HAS NOT YET BEGUN TO WHUP ASS
THE DAY I NEED A CHICK TO FIGHT MY BATTLES FOR ME--

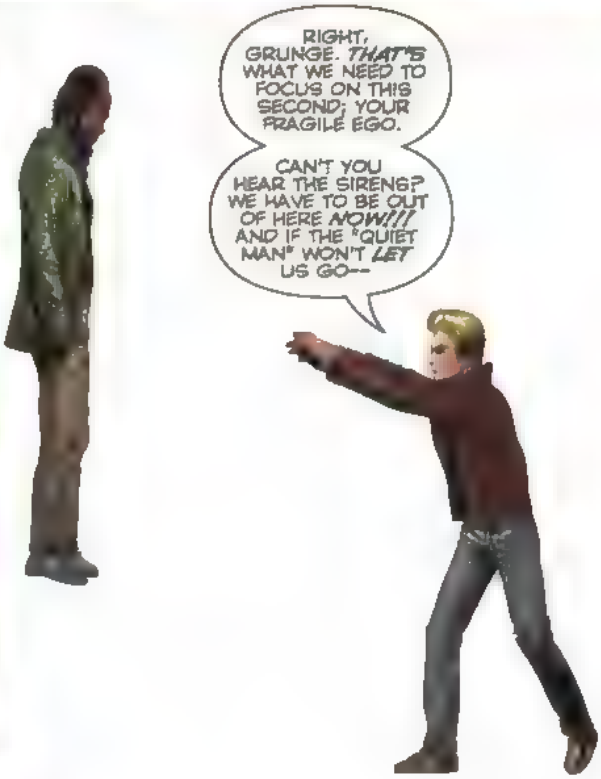

HAI-YAAA!

OW!!
WELL, GUESS THAT'D BE TODAY

FINE! CAN'T USE OUR GEN-FACTOR, CAN'T WIN BY CONVENTIONAL MEANS.
ONLY ONE OPTION LEFT TO US.
JUST WALK AWAY
DAMN SKIPPY! LET HIM PICK ON SOMEBODY HIS OWN AGE
KA-BA-THOOM

MY EARS! WHU---WHAT JUST HAPP---
K RECORDS
OH

MY GOD HE'S GEN-ACTIVE!
ALL RIIIGHT!! IT WASN'T A *NORMAL* OLD MAN WHO TRASHED ME. IT WAS A *SUPER* OLD MAN
THAT I CAN LIVE WITH

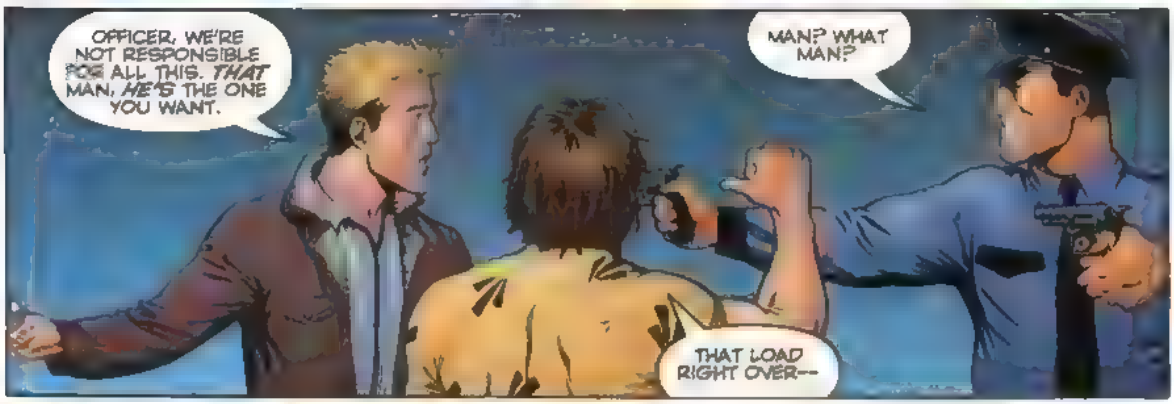

RIGHT, GRUNGE. *THAT'S* WHAT WE NEED TO FOCUS ON THIS SECOND; YOUR FRAGILE EGO.
CAN'T YOU HEAR THE SIRENS? WE HAVE TO BE OUT OF HERE *NOW!!!* AND IF THE "QUIET MAN" WON'T *LET* US GO---

AAAAAAHHHH!!

AAAHH— HUH?
WAIT. I'M OKAY. THAT ENERGY BLAST DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO ME. DIDN'T EVEN HURT, REALLY

WELL, WHATEVER AS I WAS SAYING, OBVIOUSLY THE GEN-ACTIVE GLOVES ARE OFF. YOU WANT TO PLAY WITH FIRE?
LET ME SHOW YOU HOW!

NOOO!!!
WHAT'S WRONG?
MY HANDS! BURNED!
BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE
THAT'S IT! TIME FOR ME TO TAKE CHARGE
STOP!! GRUNGE, DON'T YOU SEE? SOME-HOW, THAT GUY'S MESSED MY POWERS UP.
IF I TRY TO USE THEM, THEY'LL KILL ME!
WHO KNOWS WHAT HE COULD DO TO YOU ABSORB THAT SIDEWALK, AND HE MIGHT FREEZE YOU INTO A STATUE-- FOREVER!
BUT THEN, WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO?

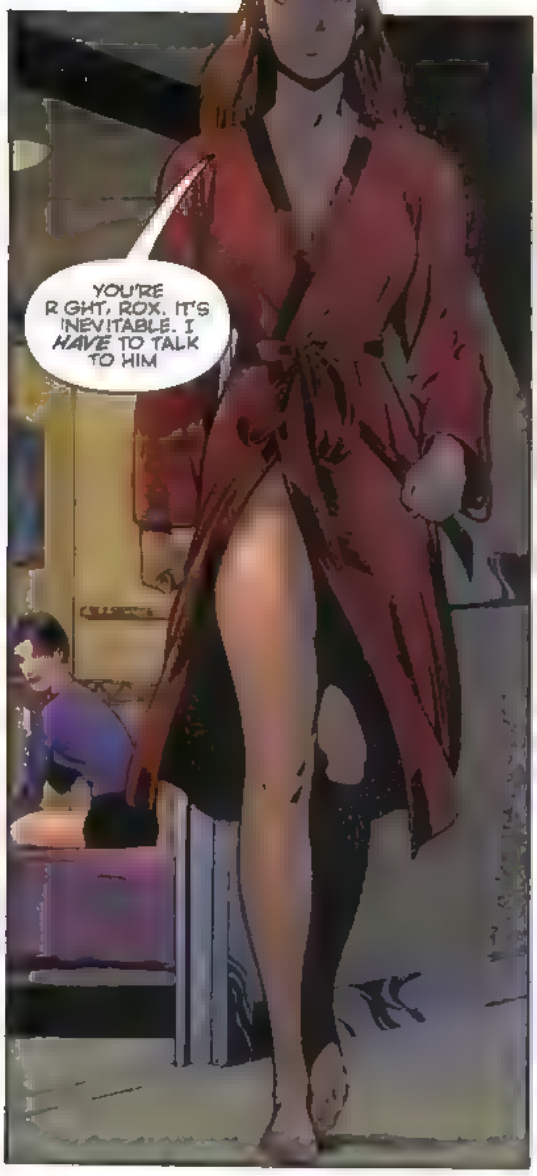


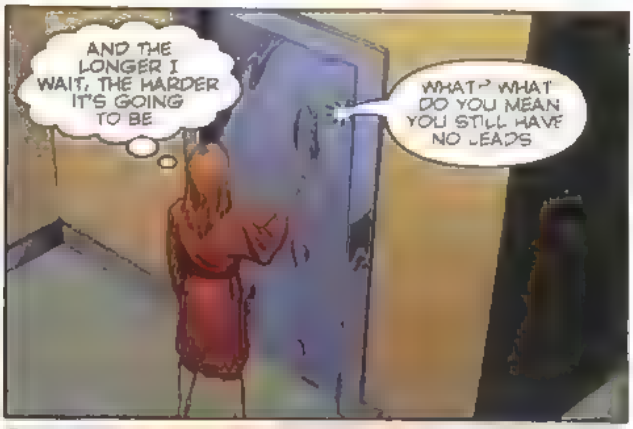
"HEY, DON'T LOOK AT ME!"

'CAUSE I'M NOT THE ONE WHO WANTS TO GO AROUND KEEPING SECRETS
THAT WAS *YOUR* IDEA
I KNOW, I KNOW, BUT I'M TELLING YOU, ROXY, IT'S TEARING ME UP 'NSIDE
SO, OKAY WE'LL JUST TELL MR. L AND THE OTHERS WHAT *REALLY* HAPPENED TO US AFTER THE COLLECTOR'S SHIP TOOK OFF.
RIGHT. SURE "MR. LYNCH, WE'VE SEEN THE FUTURE AND YOU ARE A SINGLE MINDED MURDERING MONSTER."
NO, WE CAN'T DO THAT IF BOBBY FOUND THAT OUT ABOUT HIS FATHER, IT COULD DESTROY THE TEAM.
WELL, YOU'RE THE SMART ONE, I KNOW, BUT *NOT* TELLING THEM IS CHEWING UP YOUR GUTS. HOW GOOD IS *THAT* FOR THE TEAM?
AND WHAT ABOUT YOU? WHAT WE SAW, THE WAY MR. LYNCH TREATED US. IT DOESN'T SEEM TO BOTHER YOU AT ALL.
BECAUSE THAT GUY, HE DOESN'T EVEN EXIST!
AND WON'T FOR, WHAT? ANOTHER THIRTY YEARS? *AFTER* THE WORLD FALLS APART? *IF* IT FALLS APART

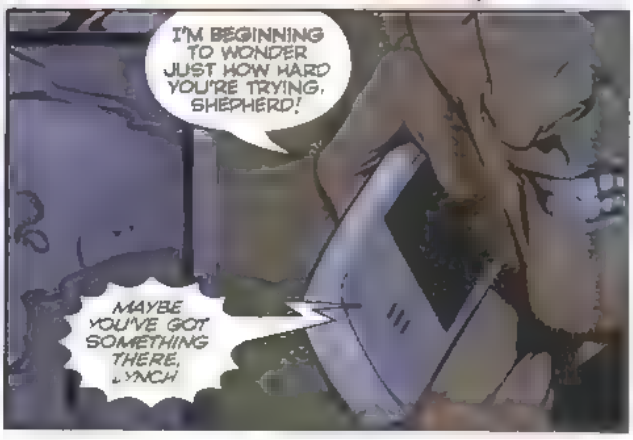
REMEMBER WHAT HE SAID, THAT OTHER MR. LP WE GOTTA TELL PEOPLE ABOUT THE D'RAHN, WARN 'EM. THAT COULD MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.
KAT. MR LYNCH HAS GOT TO KNOW THE WHOLE STORY

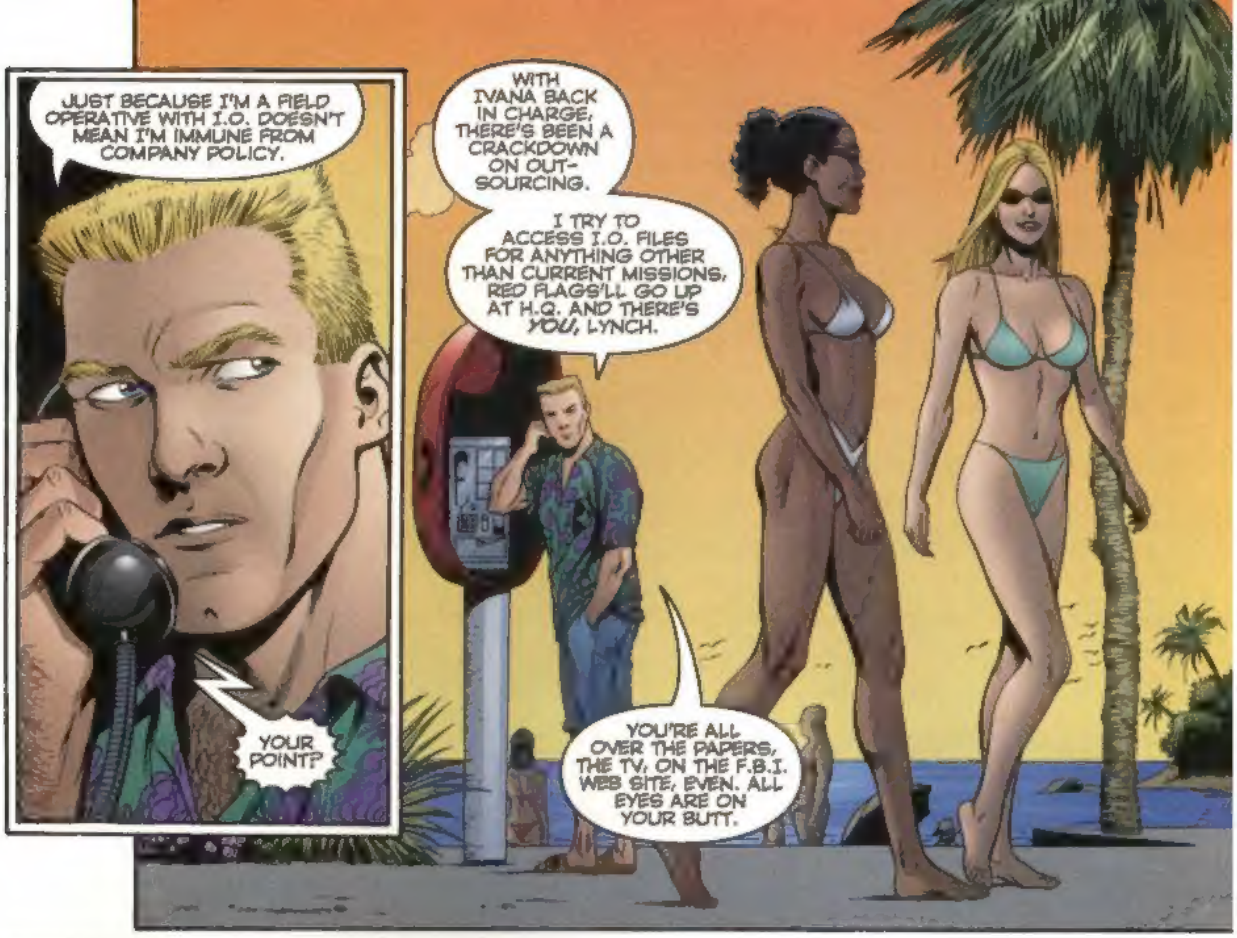
'SIDES, I'M DYING TO SEE THE LOOKS ON [illegible] AND SARAH'S FACES WHEN I TELL THEM I MET THEIR KIDS


YOU'RE R GHT, ROX. IT'S INEVITABLE. I HAVE TO TALK TO HIM


AND THE LONGER I WAIT, THE HARDER IT'S GOING TO BE
WHAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU STILL HAVE NO LEADS

YOU'VE HAD THIS ASSIGNMENT FOR MONTHS NOW!


I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER JUST HOW HARD YOU'RE TRYING, SHEPHERD!
MAYBE YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING THERE, LYNCH


JUST BECAUSE I'M A FIELD OPERATIVE WITH I.O. DOESN'T MEAN I'M IMMUNE FROM COMPANY POLICY.
YOUR POINT?
WITH IVANA BACK IN CHARGE, THERE'S BEEN A CRACKDOWN ON OUT-SOURCING.
I TRY TO ACCESS I.O. FILES FOR ANYTHING OTHER THAN CURRENT MISSIONS, RED FLAGS'LL GO UP AT H.Q. AND THERE'S YOU, LYNCH.
YOU'RE ALL OVER THE PAPERS, THE TV, ON THE F.B.I. WEB SITE, EVEN. ALL EYES ARE ON YOUR BUTT.

IF IVANA EVER FINDS OUT THAT I'M STILL FREE-LANCING FOR YOU-
IVANA'S DAYS AT I.O. ARE NUMBERED. TRUST ME ON THAT ONE.
I'VE SAT STILL FOR HER AND I.O.'S CRAP FOR TOO LONG, UNDERSTAND?!

SO DON'T BE AFRAID OF IVANA, SHEPHERD.

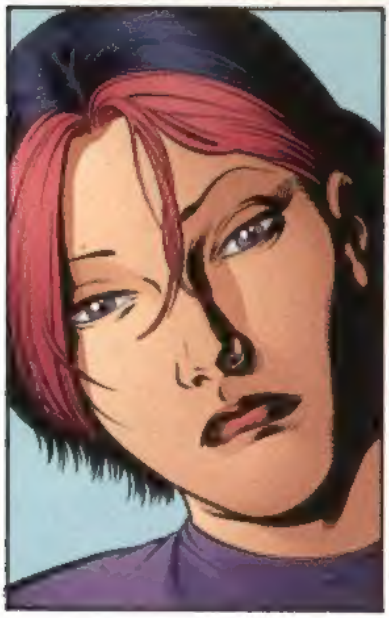
BE AFRAID OF ME!!!

GOD, I CAN'T GET THE STINK OF THE CITY OFF OF ME.
HOW COULD ANYONE *CHOOSE* TO LIVE IN THIS PLACE?
I DIDN'T THINK I COULD MISS ARIZONA THIS MUCH, BUT IT'S SO DIRTY HERE, SO CROWDED, SO COLD.
WE'D BETTER LEAVE NEW YORK SOON, OTHERWISE-
CLICK

HOKAY. MR. L'S ON THE OTHER LINE, KAT'S DOWNSTAIRS, AND SARAH'S IN THE SHOWER--
--AGAIN.
IT'S NOW OR NEVER, GIRL. NOW OR NEVER.

I -- I CAN'T!
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

JEEZ, WHAT IS THE *MATTER* WITH ME? I'M *SWEATING!*
WHY CAN'T I DO THIS? I USE THE DAMN PHONE EVERY DAY, IT CAN'T HURT ME. JUST PICK IT UP, MAKE THE CALL, AND SAY "HELLO."
IT'S EASY.



JUST PICK IT UP...

RRRRIIING!

HELLO?
HI, BABE. HOW YOU DOIN'?

HEY, HEY! WHERE YOU GUYS BEEN ALL DAY, GRU--
HUP!! NO NAMES! JUST CALL ME PAL, OR SOMETHING.
THE BOSS MAN AROUND?

NO NAMES?
UH, YEAH. HE'S HERE. WHY? IS SOMETHING WRONG?

YYYYYEAH. KINDA.